

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **GEASHILL**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 27-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	39
The Built Environment	40	34	33
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	16
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	238	233

Geashill, County Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

You are to be congratulated on the final draft of your five year Development Plan which is a well presented, easy to read, clear and concise document. As your strategic approach states you “are fortunate to live in a distinctive village with a unique built heritage, a rich variety of mature trees, a beautiful walled green and a wealth of history”. Your commitment to gradual but sustained development of the village is realistic and steady progress is being made in implementing your plan. The realisation that the plan is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end is also important.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

As your plan and previous reports state, it is the period character of many of the buildings around the square and in other parts of the village that gives Geashill much of its distinctive quality. There is a growing appreciation that the built heritage must be protected and also respected in any new developments that take place. This awareness can be seen in much of the restoration work and other developments that are taking place in the village. The public and business premises are generally well kept. The old school is an important building and as you say, its restoration is a big undertaking. Unfortunately the architecture of the present school is not in keeping with that of the village. There are still several buildings throughout the village that need painting or other work. Stone walls are a praiseworthy feature of the village, e.g. the high wall around the church, the village green wall, the wall on the Portarlinton road, etc. Repair was also noted on several stretches of stone wall.

LANDSCAPING

The quality of the village green, with its mature trees, well trimmed grass boundary wall, etc. is another highlight of the village. The mature trees around the Church and in the Glebe help frame the village and complement the trees in the Green. Your plans for future planting have been noted. Hopefully in time the wires can be put underground. When the trees are in leaf the wires are hidden but during the winter they would be much more exposed.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The mature trees in and around the village are an important habitat especially for wild birds. On the day of inspection a variety of wild birds were present in the green. You might provide bird boxes in suitable locations as part of your future plans. The presence of red squirrels is good news. The inclusion of notes on wild life in your news letter is welcome. The approaches to the Glebe Walk need upgrading and on the YARD notice board you should consider including information about the village, its history etc. this would be of great interest to visitors.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control appears to be improving but still needs on-going attention. Litter was present on the approaches to the Glebe Walk and on the Mountmellick road and in a few other locations.

TIDINESS

Improvements continue to be made under this heading. However poor quality roadside margins and several weedy gravelled margins are negative factors.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are many attractive houses and gardens throughout the village. Several boundary walls need painting and weedy gravelled boundary areas are noticeable.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The village is fortunate that it does not have lengthy approaches compared to many other centres. While hedges and grass verges are tended on all approaches more needs to be done to bring them up to a satisfactory state. The Portarlinton road sets the standard. New stretches of pavement were noted throughout the village and hopefully this programme will continue. It is also desirable that the pavements are finished in similar type materials. As has been mentioned, lengthy stretches of road side margins need to be re-tarred or gravelled. Several direction signs need cleaning.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The standard of presentation of Geashill continues to improve. Your plan is a blueprint for the future and hopefully most of it will be implemented. While the big picture is important, don't neglect the basics or the finer points of presentation.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (06/08/02)

Grass verges needed attention in the vicinity of the village nameplate on the Tullamore side of the village. Perhaps some landscaping could be considered at the Maxol Station. The buildings of the town generally looked extremely well, of note being Hamilton's and the Garda Station. The central village green looked as magnificent as ever with much activity in evidence at the local rookery! This is an attractive village green with its low stone wall surrounding. However, one of the benches to the front of the low stone wall appeared to be missing a timber slat at the back. The statues and railings of the grotto should be painted up before next year's competition. The entrance to the Glebe Walk looked well, although some weeding was necessary. The heritage information signs had yet to be erected in this location and grass cuttings had been dumped behind the wall at the entrance. Cars appeared to have been dumped in a field beside the walk. Generally,

despite these minor issues, the village was presented to a high standard on adjudication day.